

CLAIMS

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method of encoding a document comprising the steps of:
identifying multiple characteristics about text of the document;
creating a key for correlating the multiple characteristics with multiple unique indicia; and
placing at least some of the unique indicia adjacent at least some lines of text in the document, wherein the unique indicia placed adjacent each line of text correspond to the characteristic or characteristics in the line of text on the basis of the key.
2. The method of claim 1, wherein in the steps of creating and placing the unique indicia comprise color-coded segments.
3. The method of claim 1, wherein the document is stored on a digital medium, and in the steps of creating and placing, the key is stored on a digital medium, and the unique indicia are stored in a digital medium.
4. The method of claim 2, wherein in the steps of creating and placing, the color-coded segments comprise shades of gray.
5. The method of claim 3, further comprising a step of selectively changing the key by changing at least one of the color-coding and the characteristics.
6. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of placing comprises printing the document with the unique indicia adjacent to the line of text in a margin thereof.
7. A system for encoding and displaying a document comprising:

a memory containing a document and multiple characteristics about text of the document each in relation to a unique indicia, and containing a key for correlating the multiple characteristics with each of the unique indicia;

a display showing at least some of the unique indicia adjacent at least some lines of text in the document, wherein the unique indicia placed adjacent each line of text correspond to the characteristic or characteristics in the line of text on the basis of the key.

8. The system of claim 7 wherein the memory comprises a digital recording medium, and the system further comprises a processor for controlling the display, and for selectively changing at least one of the characteristics and the unique indicia in the key.
9. The system of claim 7 wherein the unique indicia comprise color-coded segments.
10. The system of claim 9 wherein the color-coded segments comprise shades of gray.
11. The system of claim 8 wherein the display comprises a computer monitor.
12. The system of claim 7 wherein the unique indicia are displayed in columns formed in the margin of the document, and at least some lines have at least two characteristics and a corresponding number of unique indicia.
13. An encoded document, comprising:
 - a document having various lines of text having multiple characteristics;
 - and
 - multiple unique indicia in a margin of the document adjacent at least some lines of text, the unique indicia corresponding to the multiple characteristics in each of the various lines of text.

14. The document of claim 13 wherein the unique indicia comprise color-coded segments.
15. The document of claim 14 wherein the color-coded segments comprise shades of gray.
16. The document of claim 13, wherein the unique indicia are displayed in a margin of the document in columns, and at least some lines of text have at least two characteristics and a corresponding number of unique indicia in the margin.
17. The method of claim 5, wherein the characteristics of each line are stored in a digital recording medium, and there is a step of selectively placing a plurality of the unique indicia corresponding to the multiple characteristics, based on the key, adjacent at least some of the lines of text.
18. The system of claim 7 further comprising a controller for enabling a user to select a plurality of the multiple characteristics, and for changing the display based on the selection to show the unique indicia which correspond to the selected multiple characteristics.
19. The document of claim 13 wherein the document is stored on a digital storage medium.
20. The method of claim 1, further comprising a step of storing the document on a digital recording medium.